



We have had some particularly good questions regarding shot placement and practicing shot placement base from the first couple of Hunt Prep topics, so this hunt prep document will deal with answering these questions as well as covering some health issues that may impact your trip.

Lodging/Meals/Medical Questions

Meals are currently being prepared for the year, our resident chefs are amazing, you will all enjoy what they will be cooking up for this year!

Having said that, please let us know of any food allergies (dairy, gluten, onions, nut allergies) as soon as possible so we can plan for that.

If anyone has any other special needs, please let us know as quickly as possible so we can plan accordingly.

We are at least 20 miles from any medical facilities, so it is important to know if anyone has any medical issues we should be aware of.

I have been getting several questions on lodging arrangements, please use the link below to our website and look under the "Accommodations" tab to look at pictures of where you will be staying. We have towels, blankets, pillows, toilet paper, eating utensils, and all that jazz, so all you will need are your camp clothes, hunting gear/weapon, and personal items.

<https://www.coloradobghunting.com/accommodations/>

Shot placement.

Shot placement is vital to taking any game down quickly. Elk are large tough animals that can take a bullet in the right spot and still manage to get out of sight. The most important point I would like to get across is not to shoot an elk through the shoulder, this shot placement leads to elk we never find. The correct shot placement is behind the shoulder just above the elbow, pretty much center mast. This shot placement will be in the lungs and will be the quickest most humane shot placement possible. Shoulder shots can be effective on deer and moose; however, we still want shots to be in the sweet spot behind the shoulder. The other issue with shoulder shots is the amount of

meat that is destroyed, most of the time we lose the entire front quarter, in some cases both front quarters due to bullet damage.

It is important to be prepared to take follow up shots when possible to ensure the animal goes down and stays down. When practicing shooting, you should practice taking 2-3 follow-shots as quickly as possible (on the range) thus developing the mental acumen that controlling your nerves and keeping focused will help keep you on point for as long as it takes (this includes archery as well). Some elk do go down right away, but we will train you to keep your scope on them until your guide says it's OK to let down. We have seen bulls get up and take off after a great shot. From experience, we know that these animals, especially our elk, are extremely tough, they can weigh up to 1,000lbs, and sometimes can take multiple shots to bring them down. On the other hand, moose are the largest animals we hunt, but they are not as tough as an elk. A properly placed shot on a Moose most times will keep a bull down.

Practicing Shot Placement

Shot placement on larger ungulates like elk and moose is extremely critical regardless of caliber of rifle. Mule deer and whitetail are not nearly as large as elk or moose; however, they are still significantly larger than deer that inhabit the east and west coasts. The difference is not just body weight, but the thickness of the skin and the size of bones and tendons.

Elk are the toughest animals we hunt, followed by mule deer, bear, whitetail, moose, and finally pronghorn. Pronghorn are hardy, but they have extremely thin skin and very lean muscle which allows clients to harvest them with smaller caliber rifles. Moose are the largest animals we hunt, but for whatever reason, a well-placed shot almost always anchors the animal very quickly.

Many clients like to try to aim for a shoulder shot, in their experience with eastern whitetails, which average around 160 lbs. and western coastal/desert black tail deer which are much smaller, a shoulder shot can be an effective shot which results in an ethical kill. When it comes to elk, which can weigh up to 1,000 lbs. This shot placement normally results in a wound and in most cases, this means a long day of tracking and a lost animal. Over 10 years of guiding and keeping records, shoulder shots have resulted in 15 lost bull elk, 26 lost cow elk, 2 lost mule deer, and 3 lost whitetail deer. This is proof positive that a shoulder shot results in an incredibly low recovery percentage.

The last thing anyone wants to deal with is a situation in which we are tracking a wounded animal, it requires a ton of man hours, and it is devastating to both the client and the guides. Wounds do happen, they are part of guiding, however a good number of wounds we have dealt with over the last 10 years could have been avoided if shot placement was behind the shoulder vs right into the shoulder.

The best way to prepare yourself for proper shot placement is to practice on a target that shows animal anatomy. There are a lot of rifle targets that show heart and lungs overlaid with the normal shot rings we are all used to using. In our opinion these targets

are the BEST to use once your weapon is sighted in as it will make you think about the placement of the vitals.

The most effective shot placement for all weapons is behind the shoulder, center mast, this ensures a lung/heart shot and is the most humane and highest recovery percentage. We use ERT Rifle Targets on our range, they are the actual size of an elk, show the vitals, and use a series of shot rings in which you can measure your effective shooting range by shooting a series of 3-5 shots. These targets were developed in partnership with Colorado State University and the NRA and are the first targets that use science to track actual shooting range. You can read more about these targets on our website on the bottom of the home page in the "Trusted Partners" section of the home page.

<https://www.coloradobghunting.com/>

Every rifle client is required to shoot on our 100-yard range prior to their hunt. Please zero your scope at 200 yards, this should put you around 2" high at 100 yards, and on average around 6" low at 300 yards. This is only an average, every rifle may be a bit different, and every rifle will shoot around 1.5 – 2" higher at our elevation compared to lower elevations.

Rifle shots can be out to 350 yards, we do not like clients to shoot any further due to the number of variables that come into play. Custom rifles with custom optics still fall under this theory since most people cannot practice shooting at a longer distance and have never shot that far at a live animal. Elk are much larger than deer, so their vitals are much larger, and a 300-yard shot with most rifles that are zeroed at 200 yards in the hands of a client who has practiced allows the hunter to hold behind the shoulder center mast and make a killing shot without having to "compensate".

Make sure you know our wound and miss policies; the wound policy is written in your contract, and it states:

CLIENT understands and agrees LLC encourages only safe/ethical shots which result in the harvest of the animal as quickly as possible. All wounds will be treated as a harvested animal and CLIENT's hunt will be over.

CLIENT understands and agrees although each situation is different, if a shot is taken and the LLC determines it was a poor judgment call by the hunter, whether blood is drawn or not, it will be treated as a harvested animal, and the hunt will be over.

The miss policy is new this year. It is not written in your contract as it is a case-by-case issue. We manage our ranches to provide the best opportunity for all clients, this includes keeping pressure on our game species and predators as low as possible to provide a safe place for all the critters to live. In the past, we have had clients miss several shots at their quarry, and it has led us to instate a policy that says that if a client

misses on two opportunities (shots at animals), their hunt may be called. I know this is going to make some of you nervous, but rest assured we will work with everyone to ensure their experience is the best it can be, however, think about following a group that “shot the ranch up” and ask yourself if you would like to follow that group. Again, this is a new policy so we will be flexible, but please understand, we are trying to ensure everyone has the best experience possible!

Please let me know if anyone has any questions or concerns on any of the information above.